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They Play It Rough In California

Now hold a spell—

We haven't much admired Dick Nixon since he came down the gangplank, breathing with fierce ambition instead of with thankful prayer.

His Congressional campaign against Helen Gahagan Douglas was a classic exercise in irresponsible vilification.

His TV spectacular with his family, including Checkers, was "Lassie Come Home" melodrama.

But here is a man who almost won—and maybe did—the Presidency. And we just can't subscribe to some of the criticism he's receiving in his campaign for the California governorship.

Sure, he's made mistakes. He wrote a book that was, on at least two counts, inaccurate. He denied on one of those counts (the CIA plan for a Cuban invasion) his own political integrity. He let press agents put their monumental feet into his mouth when he implied that President Kennedy visited California on a "carpetbagging" mission.

But it isn't easy to write a book, even with talented help, and, in the sort of campaign that California demands, it isn't easy to avoid semantic mistakes.

We hope Pat Brown beats Richard Nixon. But we'd hate for the latter to lose on undeserved fouls.